

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Policy Group Meeting, 20 March 1987

Summary Statement - The Policy Group met on 20 March 87 to review the status of a number of issues. Those in attendance were:

[Redacted]

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The following items were covered during the meeting:

1. Education Program - I brought the group up to date on the education program outlining the overseas program, the domestic program, the thrift education program, and the transfer program. I also discussed the efforts to make the retirement software more readily available through the WANG Alliance, the new software release planned for April, the status of mounting the software on the mainframe, and the optimizer program. I also mentioned some of the planned publications, the transfer bulletin and other material on the Thrift. The only question raised was by [Redacted] concerning the problem of mounting the new software release on the mainframe. According to [Redacted] it would take considerable programming and he did not have the resources to do it. I allowed as though we would have Syllogistics do more and might have a cleared contractor finish the effort.

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2. Retirement Administration - [Redacted] briefed the group on the Retirement Division's effort to administer internally all Agency retirement programs. He indicated that its first few CSRS cases were really for the Office of Finance. They had been processed in 70 days rather than the 90 required by OPM. [Redacted] expressed the hope that this processing time would be improved to make it consistent with the CIARDS's time of 60 days, once his unit had more experience in handling CSRS cases.

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3. Thrift Program - [Redacted] provided a status report on the Thrift Savings Program. She indicated that the Thrift Savings Plan signup had been slow but steady, and was approaching the 2000 mark; about 50% of these were at the maximum rate. [Redacted] also mentioned that the unit was testing software that would facilitate the recording of elections, verify contribution rates, and transfer data to OF. She also discussed recent site visitations to look at Thrift software. She felt that all of the software programs that were seen were useable. Some had greater capabilities than others, but all could perform the functions we needed.

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4. Working Group - [ ] reported on the Working Group's activities. His comments focused on the meeting that occurred the day before at which Thrift-related issues were discussed. [ ] indicated the working group had developed some options for dealing with issues. A meeting was scheduled with the staff of the Thrift Savings Board on 23 March. No guidance was requested from the Policy Group on these issues.

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5. MOU with OPM - [ ] recounted a meeting that he had with John Webster, OPM in which Mr. Webster indicated that OPM would not reimburse the Agency for disbursements for CSRS retirees until an MOU was signed. There ensued a discussion of what should be included in the MOU. There was general agreement that the initial document should be broad in scope and contain a general statement of principles. It would serve as an umbrella for future, more detailed agreements on specific issues. [ ] again expressed his willingness to draft an MOU and asked that OP provide him with the specific areas to be covered. I agreed to do so. [ ] offered to provide input on the reimbursements issues.

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6. Status of Modification to Payroll System - [ ] briefed the group on the status of testing of the modifications. He said that testing of the Master File was underway and had gone well so far. [ ] indicated that testing of the Master File would be completed by 15 March. He said that testing of the "Pay Compute" system would begin on 17 March. The "pay compute" system would have to be tested on two complete cycles; the first cycle testing would be completed on 2 April and the second on 17 April. If all went well, the system would go to the production environment on 18 or 19 April. Deductions for the Thrift would show up on the pay slip given to employees on 7 May 1987. I asked [ ] when he would know whether or not the "Pay Compute" would be ready in time to make these deductions. He said that he was confident that it would. The date of 2 April was identified (end of the first pay cycle testing of pay compute) as the time at which problems with "pay compute" modifications would be known. After some discussion, the Policy Group elected to take special action at this time, pending the completion of the first phase of software testing. I announced that a Policy Group meeting would be scheduled to review the status of testing and to determine whether we needed to warn the Agency population of potential problems. Joan Walton was asked to contact the staff of the Thrift Savings Board to ask them how it would recommend handling an Agency's inability to make the appropriate deductions.

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7. Site Visitations to Look at Thrift Software - [ ] provided a quick review of the results of visits to companies with software packages for 401K plans that might be adapted for our Thrift program. He indicated that the ARISCO package had about 85-90% of the features that we wanted. The only problem was that it was designed to operate in a different environment and we would either have to convert it to work on ours or we would have to maintain it separately. He said that the National FSI system was also good, but had more capability than we needed. [ ] indicated that the system at WFC was good if it could be ready in time; he specifically liked the menus. He mentioned that a visit was scheduled to AT&T to get a briefing on their 401K system.

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Policy Group Agenda  
20 March 1987  
3:30 p.m.  
7D32 Headquarters

1. Discussion on status of modifications to payroll system to accommodate Thrift deductions.
2. Discuss alternatives should modifications not be ready.
3. Briefing on sub-work group's site visits to evaluate Thrift software packages.
4. Briefing on scheduled meeting (23 April 1987) with Thrift Board's accountant and lawyer to discuss unique cover issues.
5. Update on Retirement Education Program.
6. Status Report on Thrift Savings Plan Operation.
7. Meeting with OPM.